

**Becker Soil & Water Conservation District  
Board of Supervisor's Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, May 15, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Becker Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, May 15, 2013 in the Conference Room of the Ag Center Building located at 809 8th Street SE, Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Those present were Supervisors Tony Beck, Duane Grossman, Kathy Stenger, Jerome Flottesmesch, and Don Lefebvre. Others present include District Administrator Brad Grant, District Administrator Peter Mead, District Administrative Assistant Jen Wentz, NRCS/Becker SWCD Secretary Alisa Wendt, District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz, and District Technicians Ed Clem and Marsha Watland.

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m. by Chairman Beck.

**Minutes** – The April 17<sup>th</sup> regular meeting minutes were presented for approval.

Motion (Flottesmesch, Grossman) to approve the April minutes as presented. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Financial Reports and Bills for Approval** – The financial reports and bills for approval were presented. Brad noted that Becker County will be moving towards a centralized accounting system. This should not affect the SWCD.

Motion (Grossman, Lefebvre) to approve the financial statements and payment of bills. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Reports – Board Conservationist Chad Severts reported on the following:**

- BWSR has been rewriting the cost-share rules and making changes to policy. The Board encumbrance rule will be eliminated and money spent outside the grant period will diminish. This will offer a longer timeframe to work with grant funds. Currently, many grant periods end during the middle of planning season; this will soon change.
- Doug Thomas has been hired back to BWSR and will lead the one watershed-one plan approach. This will use a less traditional approach to water planning.
- Peter Waller is possibly moving from Fergus Falls to Detroit Lakes along with Steve Hoffstad, a new RIM Easement person, as well as the new BC that will replace Chad. The BC for Becker SWCD will move to the middle Red River Valley section of the state.
- The Clean Water bill and changes to funding were discussed. The State is proposing additional groundwater studies.
- To remain in financial compliance, BWSR has hired an internal auditor for grant verifications and reconciliations. They started a spot check system that will verify all grants within Becker County every 7-10 years.
- The new eLINK reporting program is coming soon. Trainings will be held in June. Most all data has been transferred from the old system to the new. The new program will be more of a daily task but should lead to more efficiency. Discussion.

**Reports – District Conservationist Ed Musielewicz reported on the following:**

- Introduced Alisa Wendt, newly hired Altima contracted employee to provide administrative assistance to the NRCS and SWCD office staff.
- County ditch 17 hearing was yesterday and passed resolution to abandon and proceed with Brink Lake construction. Hopefully, the project will begin construction later this summer.
- April 24<sup>th</sup> was the project team meeting regarding Rice Lake. Topics of discussion were road work, WRP funding, and coordinating all projects to complete the job. Ed will work with the NRCS state office on this project or locally with Pelican River Watershed.
- Construction of some water and sediment control basins began with staking last week. Jeff Norby has been out working these.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> scoring period for AWEP and EQIP applications will end this Friday.
- CRP continuous applications are moving forward and the general sign-up begins this Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup>. Rental rates have increased quite a bit with sandy soil areas near Frazee going as high as \$85 per acre.
- No CSP sign-up yet. There were announcements made nationally to begin this process and now it's on hold.
- First mitigation purchase in Becker County from the Ag Mitigation Bank was made earlier this week. Wetland Bank paperwork needs to be completed; then BWSR becomes involved.
- Area I Senior Envirothon results were discussed. A total of 19 teams participated with one from Detroit Lakes.
- A building lease meeting was recently held. Our current lease expires December 31, 2013. Space issues were discussed. Moving is a possibility. If we remain in this location, lease hold improvements will need to be directed toward the building owner. Parking is still a concern.

**Reports – District Technician Ed Clem reported on the following:**

- The 2013 tree inventory has been received and wrapping was completed last week. All but 7 pre-orders have been picked up.
- We have 15 state cost-share planting projects, 6 of which we will plant with 3 already completed. We hope to be finished by the end of this week.
- Construction projects are well underway which will cause some time constraints, but Jeff Norby has been helping to alleviate much of this.
- We have approximately 12 projects this summer with 48 water and sediment control basins. As well as CRP and WRP contribution agreements.
- The nitrate well monitoring study has 46 sites to review and locate. 30 have been completed; must be finished by July 1, 2013.
- MASWCD – RIM-WRP checks for Ed M. and Marsha Watland. Forms have been received but the project hasn't started yet. Must be completed by early August.

**Reports – Co Ag Inspector/Shoreland Specialist Marsha Watland reported on the following:**

*County Ag Inspector*

- Retail seed inspections continue. Gravel pit inspections will begin soon. Weed growth concerns will be addressed beginning next week.
- Conservation Partners Legacy Grant for invasive species will be \$4,800 through 2014. This will cover eastern and northeastern Becker County – the areas of White Earth and the Smoky Hills.
- Township weed inspector training continues.

*Shoreland Specialist*

- Both lake association café meetings are set. May 31<sup>st</sup> is the date for Cotton, Toad, and Little Toad Lakes. All lake associations have been contacted and they are passing the word through their association mailings. June 14<sup>th</sup> is the date for Maud and Eunice Lakes.
- COLA meeting held last Thursday, May 9. Marsha gave a presentation on lakescaping – switching from rip-wrap to native plants. She will be offering site evaluations, permit questions, and other assistance. She's met with Planning & Zoning, the watershed, and the DNR Hydrologist.
- Marsha will be viewing a DNR shoreland project being installed on Tulaby Lake next week.
- Upcoming meetings with Tulaby and Jolly Fisherman.
- Attended COLA meeting and explained our shoreland programs. Sandy Gunderson, representing Becker County, also presented at COLA on AIS efforts. RealTime Landscape program examples were distributed to Board members.
- Floyd Lake meeting was canceled. She will meet this Saturday instead for cost-grant and lakeowner assistance.
- Lake Tour visits are moving forward; she's working with Peter and Brad on this project and developing a fee schedule. Her thoughts are \$50 per hour for a tour with boat provided by the lake owner, and the complete report would be \$200.

**Reports – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Conservation Tour:**

We finished the tour on Monday and Tuesday of this week. Ike Fischer has been gracious enough to hold this educational event at his property and work the logging station for the past 30+ years but is now passing the job onto his grandson next year. The location will remain the same. All leaders and station stop helpers were mentioned.

**Purchase of a GPS unit from CWMA grant money:**

Peter Mead requested that we use some of the remaining grant money from the CWMA to purchase a GPS unit for Marsha to use onsite. Wireless router needs for all devices were also discussed.

Motion (Flottesch, Stenger) to authorize the administration to look into this purchase with the CWMA grant funds and move forward with spending the remaining \$750. If the cost exceeds that amount, the Board must be notified. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Lake Inventories:**

As we move forward with the Lakeshore Program and Marsha continues to hold lake association meetings, we may be requested to conduct lake shore inventories. We should have some type of fee schedule for cost incurred. The schedule could include fees for time on the lake and a finished report. A boat and driver would need to be provided by the lake association or a lake resident.

Motion (Flottemesch, Stenger) to authorize the District to establish a lake inventory fee schedule to include \$50 per hour of lake time and \$250 for a final report that will be generated from the findings. The lake association will provide an adequate boat and driver to be used for this purpose. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Change of Authorizing Signature for Ag BMP Loan Program and Grants:**

Brad noted that changes need to be made by resolution to designate the District Manager as authorizing signature for these programs. Another resolution, placed in 2007 for Data Practices Act needs to be updated designating Peter Mead as the responsible party. All Grants will also need to be updated with current wording. An SWCD Manager title should cover all future contracts and grants.

Motion (Lefebvre, Flottemesch) to pass a resolution on the Data Practices Act and all bank account signature cards to change designated signors from Brad Grant to Peter Mead. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Motion (Lefebvre, Flottemesch) to pass a resolution to change the authorized title on the Ag BMP Loan Application to District Manager. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Performance Evaluations:**

Peter Mead discussed the new format for evaluations moving forward. He reviewed and compared other Districts evaluation forms and established one for Becker SWCD. This evaluation will be performed yearly.

Motion (Flottemesch, Stenger) to accept the new format for performance evaluations for all District employees. The completed evaluations will be filed in employee personnel folders. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**2013 Clean Water Legacy Grant Application:**

Brad presented information on the 2013 Clean Water Legacy Grant. Staff has discussed possible funding methods for priority projects. The following policy was presented for consideration of 2013 CWL grant funds.

**The Becker SWCD 2013 Clean Water Legacy Grant Application was approved for implementing water quality conservation practices such as water and sediment control basins, grade stabilization structures, grassed buffers and waterways in the watersheds of nine shallow lakes in Western Becker County. The designated lakes are Boyer, Gottenborg, Gourd, Lime, Stinking, Stakke, West Labelle, Marshall, and Forget-Me-Not.**

**It will be the policy of the Becker SWCD to provide grant funds for projects in these watersheds from the 2013 CWL funds as follows:**

- **Projects installed within the shoreland areas of these lakes (1,000 ft.) shall be eligible for 100% of the project cost provided all water quality practices, as determined by the SWCD/NRCS staff, are installed. This may include buffer strips, water and sediment control basins, etc.**
- **If less than the required practices are installed, such as sediment basins without needed buffers, the cost-share rate will be 75%.**
- **On joint funded projects—EQIP, AWEP, CCRP and CWL—funds will be combined to reach these percentages.**
- **For projects outside the shoreland area, the cost-share rate will be 90% of the cost if all the above criteria are met.**
- **If a landowner outside the shoreland area chooses not to install recommended practices, only selected ones, the cost-share rate will be 75%.**

Motion (Stenger, Grossman) to approve the above proposal of using the 2013 Clean Water Legacy Grant funds with a change to the wording of the last sentence by administration.  
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Cost-Share contracts:**

Contract #13-11—Irwin Kallin. Abandoned well sealing was presented for consideration.  
Motion (Grossman, Stenger) to approve contract #13-11 for 50% of the cost not to exceed \$240.  
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Clean Water Legacy contract #CWL-1-2013—Kevin Lunde. Water and sediment control basins. Estimated cost \$32,962. This project will have EQIP funding also. Eligible CWL funding is \$11,106.00 based on 90% cost-share as per policy for 2013 grant funds.

Motion (Grossman, Stenger) to approve contract #CWL-1-2013 for 90% of the cost not to exceed \$11,106.00. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Discussed District Administrator signing CWL contracts prior to board meetings. This is allowable for CWL funds but not state cost-share contracts.

Motion (Flottesch, Grossman) to give the District Administrator the authority to sign Clean Water Legacy contracts and report to the board at subsequent meetings on the contracts signed.  
Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**MASWCD Call for Resolutions:**

None noted.

The next MASWCD Meeting will be in June. Jerome noted that a RRVCSA-JPB meeting should also be held on that day.

**Other:**

Received registration materials for the Association Leadership Institute meeting which is a two-year session ending in Washington, D.C.

Continuous coverage of Dean and Brad's health care insurance through the Becker County plan.

Annual Administrative Assistant meeting to be held in Mahnomen this year on June 19-20.

Auditor coming next week, Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> to audit the 2012 financial records.

District vehicles – Discussed district vehicle needs and the need for an ATV.

Motion (Flottemesch, Stenger) to authorize the District Administrator to replace the Rendezvous and the Ford truck with one new pick-up and go through the State Bid contract that we used last year up to \$25,000. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Motion (Grossman, Flottemesch) to authorize the District Administrator to purchase an ATV with an approved cost up to \$5,000. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

Ramps for the ATV will need to be purchased also.

Being no further business, motion (Stenger, Grossman) to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 a.m. Affirmative: Unanimous. Carried.

**Approved: Don Lefebvre, Becker SWCD Secretary**

**Date: June 19, 2013**